**Formal letter template**

Here is a template you can use for writing formal letters. We have added examples within this but the main structure remains the same.

Your exact street address  
Your state and zip code

Today’s date

The name of the person you are writing to (first name and surname)   
Their company name  
Company department  
Company address and zip code

**Dear salutation** (this can be Dear Mr. Smith – if you have the name of the person just put Dear (surname) and don’t include their first name) or Dear sir. <NOTE: A LEGISLATOR WILL TYPICALLY BE TITLED THE HONORABLE>

**First paragraph** – in the first paragraph make it short at maybe one or two sentences. This should summarize exactly why you are writing to the person concerned. In this case it should be to take a position regarding the issue you want to raise. Additionally, you should refer to the piece of legislation involved.

**Letter Body** – this will have additional facts and information about your letter and why you are writing. You should explain your position using information you’ve gathered in your research. You need to touch upon the opposing argument as well though largely to show that you are aware of it. You shouldn’t demean the opposing argument but simply and tersely explain why it is wrong.

**Closing paragraph** – This should summarize the letter and have a call to action which would be you telling the person what you would like them to actually do now they have read your letter. If you want a telephone call then you need to leave your number.

**Sign off -** Usually this would simply be “Yours sincerely” or simply “Sincerely” if you have addressed a real person’s name in the “Dear Mr x” or “Yours faithfully” if you have addressed the letter as “Dear sir”

**Formal Letter Example**

Here’s an example of a formal letter to give you an idea of what it’s all about.

Daniel F. Baker,  
116 Main Street,  
Boston,  
Suffolk MA 02119  
  
October 19th, 2010

Honorable Senator B Johnston,  
United States Senate

address

Washington D.C. Zip Code

Re: Legislation

Dear Senator Johnston,

1st Paragraph- introduction

Body of letter

Conclusion

Yours sincerely,

D. Baker.

Your letter should be grammatically correct. There shouldn’t be any spelling errors. It should all be in the same font. The lines should be single spaced and paragraphs double spaced.